



**For immediate release
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REHABILITATION OF PLYMOUTH ROCK PORTICO SET TO BEGIN THIS SPRING

Contract awarded to Chapman Waterproofing Inc. of Boston

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has awarded a \$308,320 contract to Chapman Waterproofing Inc. of Boston for the rehabilitation of the Plymouth Rock Portico. Work on the historic structure in Plymouth is expected to begin in March and be completed in time for the summer tourist season.

The Portico was built in 1921 in honor of the 300th anniversary of the Pilgrim's arrival in Plymouth. Upcoming construction will involve a total roof replacement, masonry cleaning and repair, rust removal from the internal steel frame, and repair and replacement of damaged terra cotta vault tiles. Also, a cutting-edge cathodic protection system (which halts rust through the application of a safe and mild electrical current) will be installed in the Portico to protect against any future deterioration. There will be no design alterations to the Portico.

In addition to the Portico rehabilitation, additional work at Pilgrim Memorial State Park, including electrical system upgrades and public safety improvements such as replacing the deteriorated stair railing on Coles Hill, will be undertaken during the same period.

"We are very pleased to be able to restore and rehabilitate this icon of American history," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. "The significance of Plymouth Rock and its protective Portico for the citizens of this country – and indeed for people from around the world – cannot be overestimated."

With nearly 1 million visitors every year, Pilgrim Memorial State Park is one of the most visited and cherished sites in the Commonwealth, if not the nation. When the upcoming rehabilitation is complete, DCR will have invested nearly \$1 million in the park during 2007 and 2008 in a series of projects developed in collaboration with the Town of Plymouth. The rehabilitation of the Portico marks the culmination of these efforts.

"This is great news involving a very significant piece of American history," said Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth). "The Portico over Plymouth Rock has needed serious repairs for quite some time now. The awarding of this contract is validation of a worthwhile effort to restore the structure protecting one of the great symbols of our nation."

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The Portico was designed by the famous architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White, who also designed the Boston Public Library as well as Penn Station and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. As were many significant buildings across the country at the time, the Portico was built in the Neo-Classical Revival style, which suggested permanence, stability, and strength. In 1970, Plymouth Rock and the Portico were listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Boston firm of Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype is the project architect and has extensive experience with historic structures, including work on St. Stephens Church in Boston and the Vanderbilt Mansion and Franklin Delano Roosevelt National Historic Sites in New York state. Chapman Waterproofing also has much experience working with historic structures, including the Old State House in Boston and the Breakers mansion in Newport, R.I.

Construction is expected to take place March 1-May 31, during which time the Portico will be closed to the public. Interpretive displays explaining the rehabilitation will be installed near the Portico during construction, and DCR will be working with representatives of Plymouth town government and the business and tourism community, as well as legislators, on finding ways to ensure a positive experience for visitors during the period of rehabilitation.

Last year, \$133,000 in work was completed in the park in preparation for the upcoming reconstruction. That work included testing and design, creation and installation of an interpretive kiosk, landscape improvements, and restroom painting. Also, an additional \$445,515 was spent to rehabilitate Frazier State Pier in Pilgrim Memorial State Park, where the Mayflower II is docked.

“Plymouth Rock and the Portico are symbols for the entire world of where this great nation began,” said state Representative Vinny deMacedo. “It is important that when people come to see these symbols of freedom and the American dream, that they be in good repair.”

State Representative Thomas J. Calter said, “The residents of Plymouth will be delighted to see this work begin. We treasure this national symbol of our nation’s beginning, and are proud to be the guardians of it in our community.”

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.